

Notes on three Inscriptions on stone found in Chutiá Nágpúr.—By BABU
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Inscriptions and other antiquarian remains are very rarely met with in Chutiá Nágpúr. In the course of my excursions in this country, I have found three inscriptions on stone, which, though not very old, are still, in my opinion, deserving of mention in the pages of the Society's Journal. Chutiá Nágpúr has, at present, little history to speak of. It is by collecting isolated facts, unimportant in themselves, but whose mutual dependence may be ascertained in future, that we may hope to obtain a glimpse at the past history of this interesting country.

The first inscription I refer to, was found at Tilmi, an inconsiderable village, which boasted of a fortress a century ago. It was the seat of the Thákurs, a branch of the so-called Nág-vansí family. The fortress is now in ruins.

Within the enclosure of the fortress, a stone-well was constructed by one of the Thákurs, curiously named Akbar,* for the attainment of the four *vargas*, or beatitudes. One cannot, in these days, clearly perceive the connexion between the attainment of beatitude and the construction of a private well intended for the owner's exclusive use, which the well in question must have been; but according to the polity of the Nág-vansí family, it might pass for a public work. The inscription was fixed near the mouth of the well, when the dedication was performed in 1794 Samvat (A. D. 1737). The character is the modern Devanágari, and the language Sanskrit. A copy and a translation are subjoined, myself being no way responsible for the errors in orthography and grammar.

श्रीश्रीरामसहायः ॥

अभिधर्मजयाचन्द्रसम्बत्सरप्रमोदकः ।

माघवे मासि शुक्लेव तिथौ गुणभृगोः दितेः ॥

प्रतिष्ठादीर्घकूपस्यात्करोत्साह श्रीअकवरः ।

धर्मार्थकाम मोक्षाय विष्णवे प्रियते सदा ॥

* Hindús have adopted a few Muhammadan names, as Himmat, Tahawwur, Fath, 'Ajab, Akbar, Subhán, Gharíb, the compounds of which with 'Singh' occur in histories. The family tree of the Mahárájahs of Jaipúr alone furnishes a Himmat Singh, an 'Ajab Singh, and a Subhán Singh. THE EDITOR.

Translation.

“The illustrious Ráma is the help. The year consisting of the ocean (4), the merits (9), the *jaïá* (7), and the moon (1), was called Pramodaka. In the month of Mádhava (Vais’ákha), on the third bright moon, Friday, this *Dírhakúpa* (well) was dedicated by the illustrious Akbar* for the purpose of obtaining *dharma*, *artha káma*, and *moxa*, and pleasing Vishnu for ever.”

It is noticeable that the letters in the inscription just alluded to, and in the two others I am about to mention, are in relief.

The other two inscriptions relate to the construction of a stone-temple, two hundred years ago, at a village called Borea, about 5 miles N. E. of Ránchí. The temple stands as the monument of a Bráhman’s devotion to Madanamohana.

One of the inscriptions is fixed on the wall, and runs thus in Hindí:—

१ श्रीरामसत्य

सम्बत सतरसद् वार्दश
वैशाखसुदी दशमीरजनीश
श्रीरघुनाथ नरेशवीराज
लक्ष्मीनारायण ईश्वरमठसाज

Translation.

“The illustrious Ráma is true. In Samvat 1722 [A. D., 1665] Vais’ákh, tenth bright moon, and in the reign of the illustrious Rájá Raghunáth [of Chutiá Nágpúr], the lord’s temple was begun by Laxmínaráiṇa.”

The last inscription is on a black slab, cut very neatly, and one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. It is in Hindí prose, and commemorates the completion of the shrine.

श्रीमदनमोहन [नमस] ते

स्वस्ति श्रीसम्बत १७२२ समय वैशाखसुदीदशमी १० [सोमा] रके श्रीश्रीम-
दनमोहनकमठदावादेल आज सम्बत १७२५ समय सावनसुदी दशमी १० के
दरवाजा ओ कोठरी ओ द्वारदेवालीकदावा देल तैयार भेल सम्बत १७३९ के

* Query. Could Akbar of Tilmi be of Hindú or Múndá descent? The Hindus are not in the habit of adopting foreign names: the Múndás are.— See Col. Dalton’s article on the Kols. J. A. S. B. for 1866, Ethnological No., p. 177.

ताकरलगीत भेल रुपैया हजार १४००१ चौद ईश्वर निमित्ते ये किङ्क लागल हय
 से सत्य हय ताकरहिंदु भय मठ दरवाजा कारदेवाली ठाहावाय से गाइकरकत
 पीयय ब्राह्मणमारलेकहत्या गुरुमारलेकहत्या ताकहय मुसलमानभयमठदरवाज
 कारदेवालीठाहावाय तो शुअर खाय आखनमारलक ओ पीरकथारा शुअर
 कहरा डारलकदोषतेहि मुसलमानक [हय] तेवारोलक्ष्मीनारायणभगत द्वि-
 नति लिखाय राखल हय कारोगर अनिरुद्धकविनतिसांच हय

Translation.

“Salutation to the illustrious Madanamohana. Auspicious! In 1722, Samvat, [A. D., 1665] Vais'ákha, 10th bright moon, Monday, the foundation of the shrine of S'rí S'rí Madanamohana was laid; and in Samvat 1725, [A. D. 1668] Srávana, 10th bright moon, the foundation of the gateway, with the room and the enclosure, was laid; completed in 1739 [A. D. 1682], at a cost of Rs. 14,001, for the purposes of the god. The amount is correct. Now, if a Hindú desecrate the temple with its gateway and enclosure, he shall drink cow's blood, and shall be visited with the sin of murdering a Bráhmaṇ and a spiritual guide. If a Musalmán desecrate the temple, with its gateway and enclosure, he shall eat pork, and commit the sin of murdering his *ákhund* (or preceptor) and of putting pork in a saint's dinner-plate. The devout Laxmináráina caused this humble request to be written. The architect Aniruddha says, the request is proper.”

A stone inscription in Persian is lying near the staircase outside the temple; but owing to the ignorance of the engraver, the letters have not been correctly cut, and the inscription is consequently unintelligible. It is probably a translation of the Hindí inscription given above.

We learn that Rs. 14,001 in the currency of that period were expended in constructing the shrine. The sum was very large, considering the fact that the chief building material, stone, was close at hand. Now, allowing a high remuneration for the architect, there was still a considerable balance left, which probably remunerated the labourers. If “forced labour,” so urgently demanded by the present landlords, was then in vogue, a much smaller amount would have sufficed for building the shrine in question.